

INSECTS, SCORPIONS & SPIDERS

THE VILLIANS:

- Africanized honey bees — very aggressive and dangerous; attack in swarms
- Scorpions — sting can be painful; the bark scorpion near the Colorado River can be very dangerous, especially for children, and requires medical attention
- Spiders — bites from the black widow and desert recluse are serious and need medical attention; pain may not occur for several hours or more
- Other — bees, wasps, ants, and bugs-bites or stings can result in itching, welts, nausea, or, in serious cases which include allergic reaction, difficulty breathing and cardiac arrest, which requires immediate medical attention

DO'S AND DON'TS:

- Never put your hands or feet anyplace you cannot see
- Shake out all clothes and shoes before reaching into them
- Never go bare-footed, especially at night
- Do *not* wear perfume or bright-colored clothes in the desert

IF BITTEN OR STUNG:

- An allergic reaction to a bite or sting can happen quickly and be very serious; If you know that you have such an allergy, keep injectible epinephrine handy and a friend with you at all times
- If possible, kill the spider or scorpion and safely transport it with you (such as-in a zip-lock bag) to the medical facility for identification
- Wash the area with soap and water. Seek medical attention if symptoms are at all alarming

AFRICANIZED HONEY BEES

BASIC FACTS:

- They have arrived in Southern California and readily take over wild bee nests
- They look virtually identical to normal honey bees and their sting is no more dangerous; however, they defend their colony much more aggressively and with less provocation

DO'S AND DON'TS:

- Look out for honey bees when outdoors; large numbers are indicative of a nest nearby (in a hole, burrow, crevice, etc.)
- Do not disturb a nest if found; contact local authorities for removal (as a colony grows, the danger increases)
- Keep your dog under control; if it disturbs a colony, it can bring the bees to you
- Wear light-colored clothing; their enemies (bears, skunks) are dark-colored
- Avoid wearing scents of any kind
- Be especially careful when operating heavy equipment; loud noises provoke bees
- Keep escape routes in mind

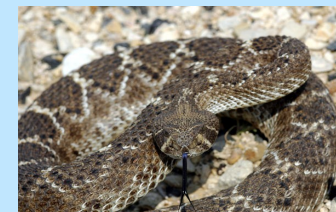
DO'S AND DON'TS:

- Run as far and as fast as possible (you CAN outrun them); avoid swatting at bees or flailing arms, and seek shelter if available (water immersion is not recommended)
- Pull your shirt up over your head to avoid stings, but don't block vision
- Once you have escaped the bees, SCRAPE out stingers (without squeezing them) using a finger nail or credit card
- Seek immediate medical attention if you experienced more than 15 stings, if you are feeling ill, or if you have any reason to believe you are allergic to bee stings



Venomous Bites & Stings

Do's, Don'ts & Basic Facts



Western Diamondback Rattlesnake



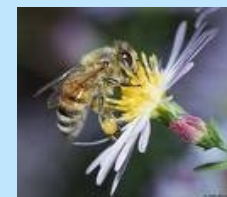
Black Widow



Africanized Bee



Brown Recluse



Honey Bee



Centipede



Yellow Jacket



Scorpion



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www.longbeach.gov/acs



AVOIDING SNAKEBITES

DO watch where you place your feet

- always watch the trail ahead of you
- don't step over a rock or log if you can't see what might be on the other side
- wear good, high boots with loose jeans outside them when hiking
- look carefully before stepping out of your vehicle in darkness

DO watch where you put your hands

- don't reach under a rock or log or into a hole you can't see into

DO NOT handle or play with rattlesnakes!

- most bites occur to people who deliberately mess with a snake, resulting in a very expensive mistake
- a dead snake — even a severed head — can be capable of biting for hours afterward (a simple reflex action)

If you hear or see a rattlesnake

- If you hear a rattlesnake that you don't see, don't take another step until you can determine where the sound is coming from, and then back away from the source of the sound
- 'if you see a rattlesnake in the wild, just back away from it and let it be
- If you see a rattlesnake in an inhabited area, seek an experienced herpetologist to remove it; rattlesnakes are an important part of the ecology and should be allowed to live if possible
- If you feel you must destroy a rattlesnake, be especially careful; use a long-handled shovel, sever the head, and then bury the head

RECOGNIZING RATTLESNAKES

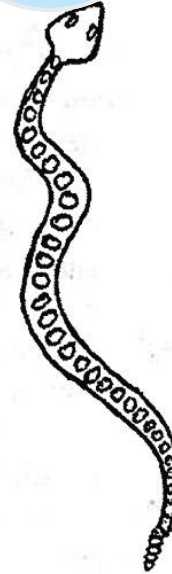
There is only one kind of venomous snake in California — the rattlesnake. There are eight species of rattlesnakes in California, but all have the characteristics shown below.

Rattlesnakes:

Head — triangular, much broader than thin neck

Body — relatively stout or chunky, with darker blotches or diamonds

Tail — always blunt; virtually always with a button (if baby) or a cluster of rattles

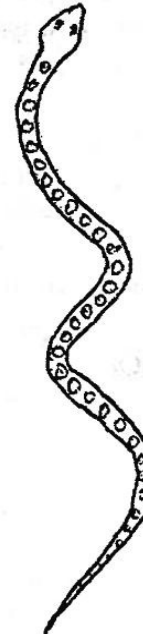


Non-venomous snakes:

Head — narrow, barely distinguishable from neck

Body — relatively thin, may or may not have blotches

Tail — tapers to a long, thin point (almost always); never with rattles



SNAKE BITES

DO

- Remain calm and reassure the victim
- Remove all jewelry, watches, etc. from the affected area
- Immobilize affected area, keeping it below the heart
- Minimize activity of the victim
- Try to identify offending snake if possible to do so safely
- Transport victim to nearest medical facility as quickly as possible
- Consider contacting the California Poison Control System (800-876-4766) or the Emergency Medicine Department of the Loma Linda University Medical Center (909-558-4000) for consultation on treatment

The universally accepted treatment for serious snakebite is the use of anti-venom, which can be administered only by a physician.

DO NOT

- Eat anything or drink an alcoholic beverage
- Take any kind of medication
- Run or engage in strenuous exercise
- Cut into or incise bite marks
- Apply any kind of suction device
- Apply a constrictive tourniquet
- Use a stun gun or other electrical shock
- Freeze or apply extreme cold to the bite

All rattlesnakes, including babies, can inject venom via fangs in their mouth (the rattle is harmless); they can strike from any position, even without rattling. Bites by large rattlesnakes are the most dangerous (contrary to popular belief) and children are at most risk; though deaths are extremely rare (fewer than 10/year in U.S.).